



Western South Dakota Outdoor Report

Wildlife Division Region 1
November 21, 2014



Region 1 Wildlife Report

DATE: 11/20/2014

North District (Lawrence, Butte, Harding, Perkins, Meade & Ziebach)

Reporting Officer: DCOS Apland, WCO's Eastman, Mutschler, Fees & Hein

Fishing Report:

Lawrence County –Fishing activity has slowed down as we transition to the ice fishing season.

Butte County – Anglers fishing Orman have been scarce due to the recent cold weather. The ice continues to form but the main body of water still is open. Please keep a safety mind-set while stepping on the ice in the upcoming weeks. Help us keep the aquatic nuisance out of our lakes!

Perkins County – The majority of fisherman have been struggling to catch many fish at Shadehill. But a few are having limited luck with walleye and crappie. What fish that are being caught look fat and healthy.

Meade County – Activity has been slow throughout Meade County with minimal fishing activity for both Meade and Ziebach Counties. Bear Butte has seen supplementary stocking of several fish species recently.

Ziebach – Anglers reports have been limited in recent weeks.



Western Prairie Lake and dams:

Fishing has been slow.

Please read the Western Lakes Regulations when fishing due to the changes of limits and sizes of fish in each lake.

Wildlife:

The resident pheasant opener was this past weekend and numerous hunters were checked in the eastern portion of the central district. Hunters were discouraged due to the amount of unharvested crops in the field. Those hunters that had limits worked hard to get them!

Duck season (High Planes) opened this past weekend and hunters seemed to do better on Sunday as the weather cooled. Lots of teal were found in daily limits. Remember, hunters are allowed two bonus blue-winged teal for the first 16 days of the season (Oct 11th-26th).

This upcoming weekend will be the end of the rifle antelope season (closing on Oct. 19th). Antelope numbers seem to be on the rise with the reduction of licenses, and hunters appeared to be successful during this year's season. An unfortunate violation found every year (including this year) is the pursuit of antelope by vehicles. This is obviously not fair chase and anyone with

Hunting Report:

- The Black Hills Firearm season is open and hunters are having some success. There are quality deer still in the Black Hills. This past year's precipitation has created quality habitat allowing for great antler growth. The hunters that are walking areas are seeing decent numbers of deer. The rut is in full swing and the next couple weeks will provide a great opportunity to catch that big buck following the does.
- West River Firearm Deer opened up on the 15th of November. Hunters please ensure that you acquire the necessary permission to access private land. Also, if you see a violation occur in the fields please remember to gather as much information without making contact with the violator. Please call the TIPS hotline with information. There are still good numbers of deer throughout the North West. Good Luck This Weekend Hunters!
- Archery deer season is open and although deer numbers are down throughout most of western SD hunters can still have a quality archery hunting experience. With the recent cold temperatures the activity has increased. In some of the prairie areas the hunters have been reporting that the deer are now in the rut. In the farm countries of NW South Dakota more whitetail deer are becoming visible as the corn is coming out. Remember to respect the land, landowners, and wildlife by following rules and taking good ethical shots.

- The Elk Prairie Units are now closed for the month and will re-open for December. The season has been great thus far. Hunters have been harvesting some very nice elk.
- Pheasant season is open and hunters have been reporting a much better hunt this year than last. With the harvesting of the corn fields in Perkins County more pheasants are being seen. Most hunters are harvesting between 1 and 2 birds on average in Perkins County and 1 bird for Ziebach County.
- Duck season also opened October 11th for the High Plains region. Some ducks and geese have started to show up in the Shadehill area. All other dams have froze up in the area.
- With the recent saw fall and cold temperatures the upland birds have bunched up and are in thicker cover.

essing such violation is encouraged to call the TIPs hotline: 1-888-OVERBAG.

The antlerless elk season opens on Oct. 16th. It's a great time of year to be out in the woods amongst elk. Elk are extremely vocal right now.

Please remember to get the 2014 Hunting Handbook and read up on new changes for this year. Also, the 2014 Hunting Atlas is out. Please review due to changes in WIA land this year in certain locations.

Fall survey is still in progress. As of now the department is surveying deer. The State of South Dakota Pheasant survey has been completed and you can find the results on the GFP website.

Resident-only pheasant season opens October 11th. Hunters remember that this season is good for public lands only and road right-of-ways do not qualify as public land.

Duck season also opens October 11th for the High Plains region. The resident duck numbers are good and can be found on many ponds throughout northwest SD. It would be a good idea to go hunting ducks with a seasoned duck hunter that can help in duck identification. The daily duck limit is such that positive identification is very important before the shot is taken.

Check GFP website for the many other planned events and classes for your area.

Things to Remember:

- With the hunting season upon us, hunters please be cognizant of the fire dangers. Pay close attention to vehicle travel, cigarette butts, camp fires, and all other potential fire starters. It is always a good idea to take along a fire extinguisher just in case!
- Backcountry roads when wet are a mess. Please avoid tearing up roads and private driveways when possible.
- Hunters please remember baiting wildlife for the purpose of hunting is illegal. Step up to the challenge, don't bait.
- All hunters should review recent regulation updates before entering the field.
- Land locked public land can be accessed by section line rights-of-way, but it is always best to ask landowners permission before accessing such lands.

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- Dove hunters are required to harvest doves in flight and 50yrd from the road.
- Archery hunters should review recent regulation updates before entering the field.

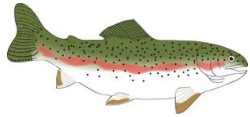
Central District

(SE Lawrence, S Meade, C Pennington, E Pennington, Haakon, N Jackson, NE Custer)

**Reporting Officer: WCO's Brainard, Edwards, Geigle, Keeton, Thomsen
DCOS McCormick**

Fishing Activity: Western South Dakota

Black Hills area lakes and streams:



- Anglers are catching a few decent trout and some crappies size of hand on Sheridan Lake. Fish are mainly being caught on worms and some anglers catching on salmon eggs. Anglers are having success with

We encourage all anglers to read the 2014 Fishing Handbook for regulations.



Western Prairie Lake and dams:

There are a few crappies being caught from shore at Curlew Lake. Surveys were conducted on New Wall Dam and New Underwood Dam. Lots of catchable largemouth bass were detected at New Wall Dam. The fish kill did not affect New Underwood Dam that much, lots of largemouth bass detected during the survey.

There is still a good population of bluegills in the lake also. Fishing should be picking up with the cooler weather.

Please read the Western Lakes Regulations when fishing due to the changes of limits and sizes of fish in each

Wildlife:

Doves are still in the area. Remember that dove season has specific regulations, so please review them prior to going out. Archery antelope season is in progress as well. There are few archery antelope hunters out right now. Good time to target water holes before the rut starts. Grouse season starts this weekend September 20, 2014.

Please remember to get the 2014 Hunting Handbook and read up on new changes for this year. Also, the 2014 Hunting Atlas is out. Please review due to changes in WIA land this year in certain locations.

Fall survey is still in progress. As of now the department is surveying antelope, turkey and deer in the Black hills. The State of South Dakota Pheasant survey has been completed and you can find the results on the GFP website.

PLEASE REMEMBER WITH DRIER WEATHER/GRASS BRINGS HIGHER FIRE DANGER. PEOPLE RESPECTFUL ON PUBLIC AREAS WITH THE FALL HUNTING SEASON APPROACHING.

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Southern District

District Report-

Big Game – I have found one more whitetail deer (a buck) which likely died of EHD. If you find any safety course planned for the nights of September 24 – 26 in Martin. Please contact Gary Rayhill or Tom Beck for more information.



County: **West Custer/West Pennington**
Reporting Officer: WCO Jacob Ehlert
Date: 9/23/2014
/2014

County: **Bennett/East Shannon/South Jackson**
Reporting Officer: WCO Tom Beck

Fishing Activity:

The cold weather is really putting on the ice. Please be careful if going onto the ice as snow cover and springs could have an impact on ice depth. The cold nasty weather has prevented anyone trying the ice yet.

Hunting Report:



Waterfowl – Not much to report here. The cold weather has all of the lakes frozen over. There is some open water below water structures on LaCreek Refuge and the sandhill spring ponds have a little open water near the springs. Some ducks and geese left with the cold weather, although I'm seeing new geese arrive daily. Still not great on numbers though.

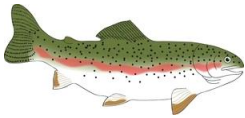
Small Game – The cold weather stopped most upland game hunting. Still birds, but cold and deer season slowed most hunting.

Big Game – Weather is the big report for this period. The opener for deer season was nasty with blowing snow and bitter below zero wind chill. The deer did not move much and harvest was very low. I did see a few nice deer harvested, but overall it was a very disappointing opener.

Date: 11/19/2014

County: **West Custer/West Pennington**
Reporting Officer: WCO Jacob Ehlert

Fishing: Deerfield is beginning to put on some ice. Be careful, the ice is still thin in places from currents and springs.



Small Game: Rabbit and grouse hunting have been excellent.

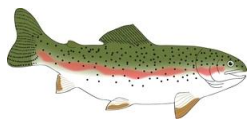
Big Game:

Black Hills deer hunters have been having great success. The rut is on and most people have shot their deer already. Road shooting has been a problem lately; please get out of the truck and off the road.

District Report:

The recent snow we had has many roads drifted in. We have had plenty of stuck hunters, remember to bring survival gear and snow chains if you want to venture up north of hwy 16.

Fishing: Guys are doing very well at Deerfield. Fishing has been outstanding after rains.



Fishing: Trout fishing has been excellent with the colder weather. Some very nice trout are being picked up lately. Remember only 1 trout over 14" in the Black Hills trout management area.

Big Game: The elk rut is on. If you have an archery elk tag the time to hunt is now. Bulls are very receptive to calls and are talking all day long.

Remember the 10pm curfew when locating animals with a spotlight. No weapons in the vehicle while spotlighting.

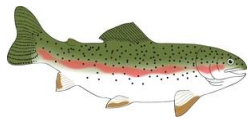
Turkey and elk surveys are also still underway. It is very difficult to see the turkeys this year due to the tall vegetation cover. We are collecting data from the Hills and Prairie units.

Small Game: Lots of rabbits and squirrels.

District Report: If you are going camping in the Black Hills Fire Protection District remember no open fires outside of designated campgrounds. This has been an issue lately.

If you witness a violation please call TIPS at 1-888-OVERBAG or your local Sheriff's Office. Making the call can prevent poachers from stealing YOUR public resource!

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2014

County: **Fall River**

Reporting Officer: WCO DJ Schroeder

Fishing Activity:



Nothing to report - - cold temperatures, wind and snow made fishing very undesirable this week in Fall River County.

Hunting Report:



Small Game: I only saw a few pheasant hunters this week. Blizzard-like conditions and cold temperatures reduced the number of hunters out in the field. Waterfowl hunting was pretty good for those that battled the cold - - not a lot of hunters out.

ESTIMATED WATERFOWL STATUS/OPPORTUNITY FOR FALL RIVER COUNTY AND WESTERN SHANNON COUNTY:

County	FALL RIVER		
	Canadas	Ducks	Snows
NE	2	2	0
NW	1	2	0
SE	2	2	0
SW	1	2	0

County	WESTERN SHANNON		
	Canadas	Ducks	Snows
NE			
NW	1	2	0
SE			
SW	1	2	0

Big Game: West River Deer season opened and came with a bang - - mostly from the weather. We had about 8-10 inches of snow along with cold temperatures and wind. This made for terrible driving conditions over most of the county. There were several nice deer harvested - - but many hunters appeared to sit this weekend out. There were a few archers out - - but I didn't see much for harvest.

District Report:

Sportsmen are asked to help assist us by reporting those you see taking over their limit of fish at Angostura or Coldbrook Reservoirs. It is much appreciated and you can help preserve the sport by reporting these violators.

Please take the time to record a license number and vehicle description when you witness a fish or game violation. Don't hesitate to call the TIP's Hotline or the local Sheriff's Office and report the violators. You will help us all preserve the sport!!

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